

NATURE PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES



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Summer 2009

A NOTE ABOUT OUR NATURE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES:

Our nature programs and activities are hosted throughout the Mercer County Park system. Some activities are entirely outdoors while others are hosted inside and outside. This e-newsletter lists all of the nature programs the Park Commission is offering this season. For safety and planning purposes we ask that people register for all programs. Registration for programs and activities is done on-line. Some of our programs have a minimal cost, while others are free. If you have any further questions, please contact jlear@mercercounty.org.

To register for a program go to the Park Commission website: <http://nj.gov/counties/mercercounty/commissions/park/>. Click on the Nature Programs & Activities link and then click on the registration tab. A registration form is also included at the end of this newsletter.

Check out the NEW Youth Activities for Summer!

YOUTH NATURE ACTIVITIES

Registration is required for Youth Nature Activities

Naturalist I Day Program

Ever wonder what a naturalist did for fun as a kid? Join the County Naturalist to spend a day enjoying her favorite past-times. We'll explore the forest's nooks, search for birds, play a good game of kick ball, and look for animal evidence. Come for one day or all three!

Tuesdays, July 28, August 11, August 25

From 9:30 am to 3 pm

At Baldpate Mountain

For children entering grades 1- 4

Cost: \$20 per child per day

Naturalist II Day Program

Get a taste of a naturalist's life during these day-long programs. We'll spend time hiking the park, maintaining trails, monitoring songbirds, sitting by babbling brooks or learning about conservation. Come for one day or all three!

Thursdays, July 30, August 13, August 27

From 9:30 am to 3 pm

At Baldpate Mountain

For children entering grades 5- 8

Cost: \$20 per child per day

Marsh Trails Volunteer Crew

Are you a trail user or outdoor enthusiast? Curious about a career in a "green" field? Join the Mercer County Park Commission at Roebbling Park to give the trails and natural areas some much-needed TLC.

Crews will be involved in basic trail maintenance, litter removal, and habitat improvement projects.

Interested individuals or groups can sign up for as many or few days as they would like. A volunteer application form must be submitted to the Park Commission and can be obtained by emailing jlear@mercercounty.org.

Fridays, June 26, July 10, 24,

August 7 & 21 from 9 am to 2:30 pm

At the Marsh Nature and Interpretive Center, Roebbling Park

For ages 16 and up



PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Registration is required for Preschool Programs

Marsh Minnows

A parent and child nature program

Spending time in nature fuels a child's imagination. Parents, why not join in the experience? With the guidance of Mercer County's Naturalist, you and your child will search for multi-legged critters, dissect a plant or flower, and explore the marsh for birds and frogs. Through hands-on nature explorations, children develop their attention to detail as they use their senses to discover the outdoors. Programs include a group story or experiment, an outdoor hike and a craft. Grow to appreciate nature with your little one.

Thursdays, July 9, 23, August 6 and 20 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At the Marsh Nature and Interpretive Center, Roebling Park

For children ages 3 to 5 and their parent

Cost: \$32 per child (for the series)

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Registration is required for family programs

Sunday Strolls

Put down the newspaper and lace up your and your little one's sneakers. Spend time as a family and grow closer while playing in nature.

The Basics of Bugs

This month's relaxed, Sunday-styled program will send your family along the trail in search of arthropods. Not sure what arthropods are? Join us for this fun morning.

Sunday, June 21 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Rosedale Park, Blackwell Road Parking Lot

For families

\$4 per person

Butterflies and Bees

This month's relaxed, Sunday-styled program will send your family along the trail, equipped with insect nets to collect butterflies. We'll be sure to observe bees from a distance!

Sunday, July 19 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Baldpate Mountain Visitor Center

For families

\$4 per person

The Forest as a Habitat

This month's relaxed, Sunday-styled program will send your family along the trail to discover the intricacies of a forest.

Sunday, August 23 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

At Herrontown Woods

For families

\$4 per person

All nature programs and activities are led by County Naturalist Jenn Lear. Please email any program questions or concerns to jlear@mercercounty.org. Note that **most** programs and activities require pre-registration. To register, visit our website, click on the Nature Programs and Activities link and click on the link for the registration form. The Park Commission's website is: <http://nj.gov/counties/mercercounty/commissions/park/>



FAMILY PROGRAMS (continued)

Registration is required for family programs

NEW for Summer 2009!

Nature at the Farm

Farms produce a variety of crops and goods such as eggs, butter, corn and peaches. But, they are also home to many forms of nature. During these programs, we'll learn about the different ways farmers rely on the environment and how nature interacts with plants and animals on the farm.

Wednesdays, June 17, July 22, August 19 from 10 to 11:30 am

At Howell Farm, meet at Visitor Center

For families

Free

Celebrate Summer Night Hike

Night life of the natural kind abounds with folklore and mysterious secrets. Join other night-loving creatures and the County Naturalist to decipher the myths and facts of nocturnal ecology. Expect to experience some nature you've never seen during the daylight! We'll end with a fun "trick" of the dark.

Saturday, June 20 from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.

At Mercer County Park Northwest, Federal City Road Parking Lot

For families

\$4 per person

Family Nature Hike

Maybe we'll use some magnifying lenses, or bug nets, or bandanas and construction paper. It's a nature hike, but the topic is the naturalist's pick, and revealed at the program!

Tuesday, June 23 from 1 to 2:30 pm

At Mercer County Park Northwest, Cold Soil Road Parking Lot

For families

\$2 per person

Family Nature Hike

Maybe we'll use some magnifying lenses, or bug nets, or bandanas and construction paper. It's a nature hike, but the topic is the naturalist's pick, and revealed at the program!

Tuesday, July 7 from 1 to 2:30 pm

At Mercer County Park, Marina Parking Lot

For families

\$2 per person

Summer's Setting Night Hike

Night life of the natural kind abounds with folklore and mysterious secrets. Join other night-loving creatures and the County Naturalist to decipher the myths and facts of nocturnal ecology. Expect to experience some nature you've never seen during the daylight! We'll end with a fun "trick" of the dark.

Sunday, August 16 from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.

At Rosedale Park, meet at Picnic area

For families

\$4 per person

Pontoon Boat Tours

Spend a relaxing afternoon kicked back on the County's pontoon boat while watching for Lake Mercer's flora and fauna, and listening to the natural history of the lake. Feel free to bring binoculars to do some off-shore birding!

Thursdays, June 11, 24 (Wednesday), July 9, 23, and August 6, 20 from 2 to 3:30 pm

At Mercer County Park, Marina

For families and adults

Free



ADULT NATURE ACTIVITIES

No registration is necessary for Adult Nature Activities.

Early Birds

Join us for a casual hike -- with your binoculars, of course. These early a.m. walks are dedicated to spotting our fine-feathered friends. Never picked up a pair of binoculars before? No problem. All abilities of birders are welcome. All Early Bird hikes are free.

Monday, June 1 from 7 to 8:30 a.m. At Howell Farm

Monday, June 29 from 7 to 8:30 a.m. At Mercer County Park NW, Federal City Road Parking Lot

Monday, July 27 from 7 to 8:30 a.m. At Baldpate Mountain, Pleasant Valley Road Parking Lot

Monday, August 24 from 7 to 8:30 a.m. At Roebling Park, Spring Lake Parking Lot

Tuesday Trail Treks

Become inspired by nature; get motivated to exercise, or join us to discover new hiking trails. Mercer County is bursting with beautiful parkland and is here for your enjoyment. Take in fresh air, energize your body and enjoy the sights and sounds of nature with Mercer County's Naturalist on Tuesday morning treks. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring a water bottle. All Tuesday Trail Treks are free.

Tuesday, June 23 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. At Rosedale Park, Blackwell Road Parking Lot

Tuesday, July 7 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. At Mercer County Park, Marina Parking Lot

Tuesday, July 21 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. At Herrontown Woods

Tuesday, August 4 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. At D&R Greenway Property, TBA

Tuesday, August 18 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. At the Marsh Nature and Interpretive Center, Roebling Park



Explore Your Parks

Get out of the house and go explore! This Sunday afternoon program will unite you and other outdoor enthusiasts for a fun, brisk hike. These hikes are a great alternative if you can't make our Tuesday Trail Treks. All Explore Your Parks hikes are free.

Sunday, June 21 from 1 to 3 p.m. At the Marsh Nature and Interpretive Center, Roebling Park

Sunday, July 19 from 1 to 3 p.m. At Baldpate Mountain, Fiddler's Creek Road Parking Lot

Sunday, August 23 from 1 to 3 p.m. At Herrontown Woods

SPECIAL SUMMER EVENT

The Lawrence Nature Center and the Mercer County Park Commission have come together to offer a



METEOR WATCH

hosted by environmentalist Dave Bosted and his daughter, Anna

On Wednesday, August 12, 2009 from 10 pm to midnight

At Mercer County Park Northwest, Cold Soil Rd/ Keefe Rd entrance

The Perseid Meteor Showers are scheduled to peak between August 11 and 14 this summer. Join us for this spectacle of an event. Bring flashlights because the viewing site might be a walk from the parking lot. Also, remember blankets or lawn chairs for your comfort. No registration is necessary for this event.

Rain date is Thursday, August 13



NATURE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES REGISTRATION FORM

Name (of parent if filling out for child): _____

Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Registrant's Name: _____ **Child's Age (or adult):** _____

Program Title: _____ Date/ Session: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Program Title: _____ Date/ Session: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Program Title: _____ Date/ Session: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Registrant's Name: _____ **Child's Age (or adult):** _____

Program Title: _____ Date/ Session: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Program Title: _____ Date/ Session: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Program Title: _____ Date/ Session: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Total Payment: \$ _____

Medical & Emergency Information (all information will be kept confidential) Please list any medications, allergies, physical disabilities or restrictions any of the participants have: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

PLEASE READ: *I hereby waive and release all rights and claims for damages against Mercer County Park Commission for all injuries, which may be sustained, by the herein named minor or myself while participating in the program listed above. I understand the content of the program and the risks of personal injury therein. I also give my permission for the Mercer County Parks Commission to admit me or my child for EMERGENCY medical treatment that would become necessary as a result of a medical emergency during this program.*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fee & Cancellation Policy: Payment can be made with a credit card or check. Refunds are issued only when the Park Commission is notified at least ONE WEEK prior to the start of a program or session. Fees are not refunded for a missed class.

To pay via credit card:

Name (as it appears on your credit card): _____

Card Type: Visa, MasterCard

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: ____/____

Amount: _____

To pay via check:

Name on check: _____

Check number: _____

Please make checks payable to: Mercer County Park Commission. Mail to County Naturalist, Mercer County Park Commission, PO Box 8068, Trenton NJ 08650.

An email confirmation will be sent upon receipt of registration and payment.